United Nations S/2005/246

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 April 2005
English
Original: French

Letter dated 4 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the presidential pardon for political prisoners in Azerbaijan, issued on 30 March 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **Hoscheit**
Permanent Representative of Luxembourg
to the United Nations

05-30889 (E) 180405 180405

Annex to the letter dated 4 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the presidential pardon for political prisoners in Azerbaijan, issued on 30 March 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the decree signed on 20 March 2005 by President Aliev of Azerbaijan pardoning 115 prisoners, 53 of whom were designated "political prisoners" by Council of Europe experts. The European Union welcomes the fact that the political leaders imprisoned following the events of October 2003 have been freed.

Azerbaijan has thus taken a further step towards meeting its obligations to the Council of Europe.

However, the European Union remains concerned about the situation of those political prisoners still in custody, and calls on the Azeri Government to release them without delay and to fulfil its undertakings to the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate country Croatia,* the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia continues to be part of the stabilization and association process.